



Rancho Simi Trailblazers

A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation



Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District events can be viewed at www.rsrpd.org



UPCOMING EVENTS

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice. Please see <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.



The RANCHO SIMI TRAIL BLAZERS are looking for leaders for public hikes! If interested, please contact Michael Kuhn at mike.kuhn@simitrailblazers.com. Applicants must be evaluated by the board and would be subject to the park district's standard background check.



January 4, 2020 – The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak

4.6 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,000' elevation gain) or 8 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1750' elevation gain)

The Hummingbird Trail passes through (and on) a variety of imposing rock formations along the way up to the Rocky Peak Fire Road including very large boulders and giant slabs of sandstone rock, many with small "caves." Once we reach the fire road, we'll follow it uphill northward to the Rocky Peak spur trail while enjoying sweeping views of eastern Simi Valley, the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills (including the Boeing/Rocketdyne facility). We'll visit the San Fernando Valley Overlook (very near Rocky Peak) and optionally the actual Rocky Peak. Meet at the Trailhead at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch/snack and sunscreen. Wear boots.

Directions to Trailhead: Take Hwy 118 to the Kuehner Drive exit. Head north (turn left) to the limited parking area at 2409 Kuehner Drive near the trailhead (just outside the gated entrance to Hummingbird Ranch). NOTE: Pay close attention to the **No Parking** signs in the area. If there's no room to park at the trailhead, you can also park in the small lot at the northwest intersection of Kuehner Drive and Mt. Sinai Drive, about halfway between the 118 freeway and the trailhead.

*January 11, 2020 – Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak**

9 MRT – Moderate to Strenuous (1,600' elevation gain/loss)

Our hike will begin by following an easement through Indian Springs Estates ("the Bel Air of the Valley") to the lower end of the unpaved Johnson Motorway, an old abandoned dirt and sandstone roadbed. We then follow the motorway as it climbs 3.5 miles to the Rocky Peak Fire Road, passing through a landscape of dramatic rock formations and providing views of the Santa Susana Mountains and Devil Canyon to the north. Upon reaching the fire road we follow it southward for about a mile to a spur trail leading to Rocky Peak, enjoying views of Simi Valley, the San Fernando Valley and the surrounding mountains. We return the way we came. Meet at the Trailhead at **8AM**. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, lunch/snack and sunscreen. Wear boots.

Directions to Trailhead: Take Hwy 118 east to the Rocky Peak exit in Santa Susana Pass. Turn right (south) and then turn left (east) onto Santa Susana Pass Road. Follow Santa Susana Pass Road 1.3 miles as it descends into the San Fernando Valley. Turn left (north) on Iverson Road and drive 0.3 mile to the Hwy 118 overpass. Park alongside Iverson Road on either side (without blocking the road) and wait for the leader(s).

January 15, 2020

Club Meeting 5:30PM Park District: 4201 Guardian Street, Activity Room #2 - Everyone is welcome to attend.

January 17, 2020 – Trailblazer Holiday Potluck Party - 6:30 to 9:00PM

Ursula Christie's home: 576 Pinecliff Place, Simi Valley

Ursula has once again offered to host the holiday get together at her home. Please join us for the food, festivities and camaraderie. Bring a dish or dessert to share. Please RSVP on line at: https://www.simitrailblazers.com/event/christmas-holiday-party-potluck-ursula/?instance_id=7369

January 18, 2020 – Work Party - Lower Stagecoach Trail

The January Trail Blazers trail work party will be held Saturday January 18th on the Lower Stagecoach Trail. Meet at the eastern end of the Corriganville Parking lot at **8AM**. We will carpool from the parking lot to the upper trailhead on Santa Susana Pass Road. We will work from **8AM to Noon**. As always, you are welcome to work for a shorter time period if you desire. Hope to see you there. Corriganville is located at the east end of Smith Road, off of the south end of Kuehner Drive. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water, hat, sunscreen, and gloves to work on the trail. Tools will be provided.

January 25, 2020 – Griffith Park - Fendell Park to Mt. Hollywood and Mt. Lee*

5.2 MRT – Moderate (1,026' of elevation gain/loss) or 9-mile counterclockwise lollipop Loop – Moderate-to-strenuous (1,743' of elevation gain/loss)

Mt. Hollywood is by far the most popular hiking trail in all of Griffith Park. One of the reasons for its popularity is access and a million-dollar view of Los Angeles, including the Pacific Ocean and eastern San Fernando Valley. NOTE: The longer hike will add hiking from Mt. Hollywood to Mt. Lee (the Hollywood sign).

Meet at **8AM** at the 118 & Stearns St. Park & Ride. Bring 2 to 3 quarts of water and a snack. Wear boots.

HIKE REPORTS

November 30, 2019 – Escondido Falls Trail



6 hikers carpooled to Escondido Canyon Park at the junction of Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and East Winding Way on a chilly cloudy winter morning. There was very little traffic although we didn't leave Simi Valley until 8 AM. (NOTE: We had planned to hike in Charmlee Wilderness Park, but when we arrived there we encountered a closed gate and a "Keep Out" sign at its entrance, presumably as a result of last year's Woolsey Fire).

After parking in the small parking lot adjacent to PCH and paying the \$8.00 parking fee, we began our hike by walking up Winding Way past some beautiful homes while enjoying views of the Santa Monica Mountains and the Pacific Ocean (there were many "Stay on the Trail" signs guiding us as to which side of the paved road to walk on).

At just under a mile, we reached the signed trailhead where we began following a single-track dirt trail down into Escondido Canyon. We crossed the creek and turned left (upstream), following the nearly level forested trail as it crossed the winding stream several times. The hike was very pleasant as a result of recent rain; there was flowing water in the stream and there were several types of blooming plants along the way. Eventually the trail began rising, though not steeply, and we soon reached Escondido Falls. There was a slender waterfall flowing on the right side of the face of the wide lower waterfall as we stood in the lovely area at its base which was "surrounded by travertine rock." After taking a break to enjoy the peaceful environment (there were no other hikers while we were at the waterfall), we reluctantly returned the way we came and returned to Simi Valley having completed a 3.8-mile hike with just under 600' of elevation gain/loss on a great day for hiking.

December 7, 2019 – Trippet Ranch, Eagle Rock, Hub Junction and Musch Trail Loop - Hike Cancelled due to rain

December 14, 2019 – Work Party - Wild Animal Corridor - Cache In Trash Out Event



It was cool and cloudy, the morning of the eleventh annual Wildlife Corridor work party event. Fifteen people assembled near the trailhead at Camp Rotary in Corriganville Park. Three Trail Blazers and twelve Geocachers were in attendance. After a slight delay with our supplies, we headed up the trail to the Corridor, gaining 350' in just 0.3 miles.

Having done this event for so many years, our well-seasoned workers knew exactly what needed to be done, and finished up just over an hour later. This left plenty of time for good friends to tell their latest tall stories and do some very enjoyable catching up. Everyone agreed we would do it all again next year.



15 hikers assembled at the starting (and ending) point of our planned loop hike in Malibu Creek State Park on a chilly beginning-of-winter morning. We began hiking northward along the North Grassland Trail as it passed through a landscape covered with bright green grass and dotted with oak trees blackened by last year's Woolsey Fire. We soon reached the dirt Liberty Canyon Fire Road which we followed through the oak-dotted rolling hills of the Liberty Canyon Natural Preserve to the Phantom Trail's northern trailhead.

Soon we began climbing steadily up a still-heavily-wooded slope heading southward until we crested high on a ridge. Continuing southward along the ridge we encountered patches of bright green grass and enjoyed distant views of the surrounding area which was surprisingly green; there were also a few blooming plants of various types as well as lots of blooming cliff asters.

Eventually the trail dropped down to Mulholland Drive which we crossed to the Cistern Trail which led us to the Lookout Trail. As we descended the Lookout Trail we had views of Century Lake and the surrounding craggy mountains. We enjoyed a lunch/rest break along the shady shore of Century Lake and watched a few coots and mallard ducks floating on the water and searching for food. We then followed Crags Road eastward to the picturesque Rock Pool (along Malibu Creek) where quite surprisingly we were the only people there. However, we did pass a group of aspiring mountain climbers practicing rock-climbing as we neared the Rock Pool. Eventually we followed the High Road and the Grasslands Trail northward back to our vehicles parked along Mulholland Highway west of Las Virgenes Road and returned home having completed a scenic 8-mile hike with about 1,400' of elevation gain/loss on what had become a very pleasant morning.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS DRAKE

The exploits of Francis Drake are legendary. Drake was commissioned by Queen Elizabeth of England to prey on Spanish ships and ports in order to challenge Spain's claim to the Pacific rim and to explore the west coast of the Americas from the Estrecho de Magallanes to the presumed Strait of Anian, i.e., the Northwest Passage. The King of Spain's policy was to destroy any English ships and to kill all English seamen found west of the line of longitude, which had ceded all lands of the Indies by papal bull to Spain. Drake had been attacked by the Viceroy of New Spain when his five ships were harbored at San Juan de Ulloa, Mexico, in 1568, where three ships, including the Queen's, had been destroyed and 300 Englishmen killed in the battle and its aftermath. An English theologian claimed that England had privateering right against the Spanish Crown until the loss at Ulloa had been fully avenged. Drake plundered several harbors along the west coast of South America and took two Spanish treasure ships. The cannon and treasure, primarily silver, and other provisions from those ships were eventually transferred to the Golden Hind. Drake circumnavigated the globe on a three year voyage begun in 1577 and completed in September of 1580. He did so rather than trying to run the gauntlet of Spanish fighting ships along the west coast of South America. The Spanish had every reason think that Drake had no alternative but to retrace his route around the southern end of South America. He returned to England with fabulous riches, which made him, his investors and the queen quite wealthy. (The Queen's share of the treasure was equivalent to two and half time the annual budget of the crown.)

Part of Drake's commission from the Queen apparently was to seek the "Northwest Passage." He strove mightily to do so - making it as far north as the Oregon coast - but was driven back by powerful northwest winds. He then sought a port where he could careen his leaky flagship, the Golden Hind, for repairs. On June 17, 1579 he sailed into a "faire and good Baye" "near 38 degrees north latitude." He reconnoitered by small boats for three days before settling on a suitable anchorage and encampment site. He spent 36 days there with 60+ crewmen, established a fortress, careened his ship, repaired its leaky bottom, treated with the Indians, made short excursions to the interior and erected a brass plate commemorating his arrival in "Nova Albion" (New England) and took possession for the Queen. On July 23rd he weighed anchor and departed the bay, stopped briefly at an offshore island before commencing his voyage across the Pacific. The mystery, of course, is where did he spend those 36 days. The question is exasperated by the lack of Drake's log.

Drake had been on a secret voyage into territory claimed by Spain. When he returned to England there was real threat of an invasion by Spain, i.e., what took the form of the Spanish armada. In fear of the success of the invasion, great care was taken to make sure that any records of Drake's adventure would not fall into Spanish hands. His log of his voyage has yet to be found.

It has long been argued that he had spent those days in "Drake's Bay," which is on the Point Reyes Peninsula. The bay is south-facing. Others have argued that he was in Bodega Bay. The only argument for these locations is that they are at approximately 38 degrees north latitude. A drawing of Nova Albion appears as an inset on a world map published in Holland a decade after Drake's return to England. England's royal cartographer was a friend of the Dutch map maker and certainly have been the source of the detailed inset - perhaps to bolster England's claim to Alta California. No physical evidence had been found. However, in 1936 a plate of brass was found by a young man, who climbed a hill looking for a place to relax after changing a flat tire. The plate was found half buried when he moved a large stone to sit on on Greenbrae Ridge overlooking the south face of Point San Quentin on the Marin coast of San Francisco Bay.

CAPTAIN FRANCIS DRAKE continued

The brass plate was inscribed with a text claiming Novae Albionis for the Queen. The plate is dated June 17, 1579 and has been authenticated as genuine after decades of controversy. The plate may be the only physical evidence of Drake's presence in California and is the oldest public document in the English language written in the western hemisphere. (Those who argue for Drake's Bay as the place where Drake and his entourage spent their 36 days suggested that a native American had removed the plate from its original location.)

Robert H. Power, "Drake's Landing in California: A Case for San Francisco Bay," *California Historical Quarterly*, Vol. LII, No. 2 (Summer 1973), pp. 100-130, based upon the 1589 inset on the Dutch world map, argued persuasively for Drake having gone through the Golden Gate and anchoring near Point San Quentin on the Marin shore of San Francisco Bay. The 1589 inset shows what one could see from the anchorage. The map itself and the view from the anchorage are compelling. Better still, Greenbrae Ridge, where the brass plate was found, overlooks the presumed anchorage and temporary fort used by Drake. It is likely that the brass plate was found right where it had been left in June or July, 1579.

Because the Golden Hind was overloaded and top heavy, Drake left one bronze and two cast-iron steel banded cannons and an anchor behind in California. The cannons were his oldest and were obsolete by the late 16th Century. What is of interest to us is that one bronze and two cast iron steel belted cannons were found during the 1980s a couple of hundred feet off of Coal Oil Point adjacent to the U.C. Santa Barbara campus, and a large anchor was found in the Goleta Slough near there during the late-19th Century. The cannons had been spiked, rendering them useless. It is likely, that they had been left on the cliff top of Coal Oil Point and over the course of the next century or two sea cliff erosion, primarily during southeasterly storms, toppled them into the sea. Eventually, further sea cliff erosion left them in shallow water beyond the cliffs. (There is really no other way to account for how they got into such shallow water on bedrock given their great weight.)

What is not accounted for is what Drake did during the winter of 1578-79. It is very unlikely that he would have risked sailing the high seas. Perhaps he wintered over in the Goleta Slough, which was navigable by large sailing vessel until the late-19th Century. It would have made perfect sense to move cannon to Coal Oil Point to protect his ship. After all, he had in his ship a great treasure. It is logical that he would have to worry about the Spanish making every effort to regain what he had taken. As far as they were concerned, the only place where he could have been was someplace along the coast of North America north of Mexico. At that time they could not have conceived that he would attempt to sail across the Pacific and beyond. The cannon would have been a good three quarters of a mile closer to any enemy vessel and possessed a modest elevation advantage. This advantage would have forced an enemy vessel to stand off far enough to be out of range of the Golden Hind. It is logical that the cannons so moved would have been those that Drake could best afford to abandon if he had to make a nighttime run for the open sea to escape an enemy vessel.

If the cannon were placed there by the late 18th Century Spanish, there is the question of why they would have fortified Coal Oil Point? Without a vessel to protect, there simply wasn't anything in the immediate area that the Spanish would have been concerned about. If Drake had wintered in the slough, he would have had every incentive to place cannons there. Santa Barbara was eventually protected simply by locating the mission and presidio sufficiently inland to be out of range of ship-borne cannon.

It is my opinion that Drake did winter over in the Goleta Slough. Come spring, I suggest that he sought after the "Northwest Passage." That quest was thwarted by high winds and heavy seas and the fragile condition of his leaky ship. Retreating south, I suggest that he entered into San Francisco Bay in search of a good location to repair his vessel. The repairs took 36 days from June 17 to July 23, 1579. If Drake did winter over in the Goleta Slough, the Chumash Indians of the area would have had a prolonged exposure to their English visitors.

Mike Kuhn

REGULARLY SCHEDULED HIKES

(Red Flag Warnings and Rain cancels the hike – No hikes on holidays)

Sunday Evening - Rocky Peak Fire Road

During Daylight Savings Time meet at **5PM** and during Standard Time meet at **4PM** at the Rocky Peak Fire Road trailhead on the northern side of the Rocky Peak exit from the 118 Freeway. Take the Rocky Peak exit on the 118 Freeway and head north over the freeway. Park at the trailhead or across the bridge on the Santa Susana Pass Road. (Strenuous - 4.8 MRT - 1,200' elevation gain).

Tuesday Evening - Mt. McCoy Trail

During Daylight Savings Time meet at **6PM** in the parking lot, located to the south of Donut Delite, near the NE corner of Madera and Royal. There is no hike during Standard Time.
(Moderate - 3.07 MRT - 600' elevation gain)

Thursday Evening - Chumash Trail

Meet at **6PM** at Chumash trailhead. Directions: Take the 118 Freeway to Yosemite exit. Go north on Yosemite and turn right on Flanagan Dr. The trailhead is at the north end of Flanagan Drive.
(Moderate to Strenuous - 5.4 MRT - 1300' total elevation gain.)

Due to unforeseen circumstances, all activities are subject to change without notice.

Please see <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/> for event details and the most up-to-date schedule.



RSTB Calendar January 2020



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 New Year's Day Kwanzaa last day	2 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	3	4 The Hummingbird Trail and Rocky Peak 8AM See Upcoming Events
5 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	6	7 No hike during Standard Time	8	9 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	10	11 Johnson Motorway to Rocky Peak* 8AM See Upcoming Events
12 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	13	14 No hike during Standard Time	15 Club Meeting 5:30PM	16 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	17 RSTB Member Holiday Potluck Party 6:30PM See Upcoming Events	18 Work Party - Lower Stagecoach Trail 8AM See Upcoming Events
19 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	20 Martin Luther King Day	21 No hike during Standard Time	22	23 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule	24	25 Griffith Park - Ferndell Park to Mt. Hollywood & Mt. Lee* 8AM See Upcoming Events
26 Rocky Peak Fire Road 4PM See Schedule	27	28 No hike during Standard Time	29	30 Chumash Trail 6PM See Schedule Happy Birthday Daniel DeGoey	31	

SANTA ANA WILDFIRE THREAT INDEX - Provides a 6 day forecast of Santa Ana Winds Wildfire Threats on a color coded map
<https://fsapps.nwcg.gov/psp/sawti/>

CALIFORNIA FIRE WEATHER MAP - Provides actual Red Flag Warnings and Fire Weather Watches
<https://www.fire.ca.gov/programs/communications/red-flag-warnings-fire-weather-watches/> (Scroll down to map)

* Not within the jurisdiction of the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District.

No dogs 🚫 allowed on trail(s). For additional information on hikes/work parties, contact the Rancho Simi Recreation and Park District at 805-584-4400. **Special Note:** On all hikes and work parties, bring water and wear lug-soled boots.

Full descriptions of these hikes and activities are available at <https://www.simitrailblazers.com/calendar/>



-----cut out and return with your payment-----

MEMBERSHIP

Please enroll me as a New () or Renewing () member of the Rancho Simi Trail Blazers for the annual donation fee of

Single.....\$10 Family.....\$15

Name _____ Birth Month _____ Day _____

Address _____

Family memberships: Please list names and birthdays of additional family members (Month & Day Only)

Phone (provide up to two numbers): work/home/cell _____

Newsletters are distributed by email only. Contact the Membership Chair if you require a copy by US mail.

Email address _____

How did you find out about the RSTB? _____

**Please make out tax deductible member donation check for the year to:
Rancho Simi Foundation** and mail it to **RSTB, P.O. Box 1231, Simi Valley, CA 93062**

Rancho Simi Trailblazers <i>A Division of the Rancho Simi Foundation</i>			
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